

NEWSLETTER

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY



SDNG CHANGES COMMAND

South Dakota Army and Air National Guardsmen welcomed their new commander at a change of command ceremony, June 8, at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center in Rapid City.

Maj. Gen. Jeffrey P. Marlette took command as the next adjutant general of the South Dakota National Guard and succeeds Maj. Gen. Timothy A. Reisch, who served in the position since April 2011.

"Today we recognize and we honor two great men," said Gov. Kristi Noem. "We say goodbye to Maj. Gen. Reisch, who has served with distinction as adjutant general over the past eight years, and we welcome Maj. Gen. Marlette, as he steps into his new position and assumes command of this great organization."

As adjutant general, Marlette will command the state's more than 4,200 South Dakota Air and Army National Guard men and women with over 1,000 full-time federal and state employees. He will be responsible for strategic planning, assignment of leaders, recruiting, training, equipping, mobilization, facilities, and public relations.

He now serves as a member of Gov. Noem's cabinet leading the Department of the Military. In this capacity, he is responsible to ensure the SDNG is trained and ready to respond to all state and federal missions.

"We celebrate Maj. Gen. Marlette as he takes command as South Dakota's 22nd adjutant general," said Noem. "Marlette is the right man, at the right time, at the right place to take leadership and command. This is a man who is prepared."

(continued on next page)



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Change of Command.....	2
Reisch Retires	3
SDDVA Outreach	4
D-Day Celebration	4
Walworth County VSO.....	4
DAV State Convention.....	5
DAV State Convention.....	6
AL State Convention.....	7
AL State Convention.....	8
VA Smoke Free	9
Upcoming Events.....	10



Happy Father's Day
To the military Dads who will not be
with their children today...
Bright blessings to the Fathers of our soldiers
and Appreciation to the Fathers in uniform
sacrificing so much to protect and preserve
the Freedom we enjoy today and every day in the USA

CHANGE OF COMMAND (CONTINUED)

Marlette not only has the experience but also the support of his family as he starts his new journey as adjutant general.

"I want to thank my family for their love and support," said Marlette. "They are always there for me and I could not head down this road without their support."

Marlette also has had opportunities throughout the National Guard that allowed him to meet new friends that challenged him and pushed his limits.

"I have had great career opportunities that have challenged me and have allowed me to work with some amazing teams and individuals along the way," said Marlette.

Marlette presented his coin to one of those individuals as his first official act as adjutant general.

"As my first official act as the new South Dakota adjutant general, I want to present my very first adjutant general coin to one of the finest soldiers I ever had a chance to serve with" said Marlette. "Maj. Gen. Reisch, please accept this coin as a token of appreciation for the excellent manner which you performed as the 21st adjutant general."

Marlette began his military service enlisting in the South Dakota Army National Guard in 1980. He received his commission through the South Dakota Military Academy Officer Candidate School in 1982.

Marlette's command assignments include commander of the 235th General Supply Company; 2nd Battalion, 147th Field Artillery; Joint Force Headquarters, 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade and assistant adjutant general - Army.

During his 41-month tenure as commander of the 2-147th Field Artillery, the battalion successfully deployed for 14 months in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The battalion received the Distinguished Unit Citation for their outstanding performance during their deployment.



Prior to Marlette's selection as adjutant general, he served as a policy advisor and West River regional director for U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds. In that role, he supported Sen. Rounds in his committee assignments on Senate Armed Services and Senate Veteran's Affairs.

He also served many years as a superintendent of schools in South Dakota school districts.

Marlette holds Bachelors and Master's Degrees in Education from Northern State University, an Education Specialist Degree from the University of Sioux Falls and a Master's Degree in Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College.

REISCH RETIRES AFTER 40 YEARS OF SERVICE TO SDNG

Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, of Howard, retired from the South Dakota National Guard after more than 40 years of military service to his community, state and nation. More than 200 people attended the retirement ceremony honoring Reisch at Joint Force Headquarters on Camp Rapid, June 7.

Reisch retired as the adjutant general of the South Dakota National Guard and secretary of the SD Department of the Military and held numerous key leadership positions throughout his career.

"His tremendous leadership and enforcement of standards leaves no question the performance of the South Dakota Guard was at the very best under his command," said Gov. Kristi Noem, during the ceremony.

Reisch served as the adjutant general from April 2, 2011 - June 8, 2019, and was responsible for the preparation of more than 4,200 National Guard Soldiers and Airmen and over 1,000 full-time federal and state employees to respond in times of state or national emergency.

"My favorite part of being in the Guard is the people," said Reisch. "Throughout your whole career you're blessed to be assigned to units with great people and you look forward to the weekend drills so that you could interact with your soldiers."

During his career, Reisch served at every level of command and in nearly every staff position at the company, battalion and brigade level.

He received his commission as a second lieutenant through the South Dakota Military Academy Officer Candidate School program in 1980, branching as an engineer officer.

Reisch's leadership positions included commander of Company B and C of the 153rd Engineer Battalion, 153rd Engineer Battalion, 109th Engineer Group, the first commander of the 109th Regional Support Group, and deputy commander of Joint Force Headquarters. He was also named the assistant adjutant general - Army in May 2009.

He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration from Upper Iowa University; a Master's Degree in Administrative Studies from the University of South Dakota; and a Master's Degree in Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College.

Under Reisch's leadership, units and members in both the Air and Army National Guard received an astounding 159 national awards from 2011-2018 for performance in areas that included maintenance, safety, diversity, readiness, family, energy, supply, distinguished flying and many more.

"I want to thank every soldier and airman in the South Dakota National Guard for the way that they've made me look good and more importantly made the South Dakota National Guard look good," said Reisch. "We take a back seat to nobody here in South Dakota."



SDDVA PARTICIPATES IN FORT THOMPSON OUTREACH

SDDVA Field Officer Kevin Bowen attended the annual I.H.S. Health Fair in Fort Thompson last week.

Bowen visited with veterans about the numerous benefits available to them at both the state and federal levels.

This is the fifth year that SDDVA has participated in this great outreach event.



D-DAY ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



SDDVA Secretary Greg Whitlock attended a special 75th Anniversary of D-Day Invasion program in Custer last week, along with Custer County VSO Jana Virtue.

Highlights of the program included a keynote address from Lt. Governor Larry Rhoden, a 21-gun salute, and WWII Veteran Clyde Gullickson leading the group in some patriotic songs.



NEW WALWORTH COUNTY VSO

Walworth County Commissioners have selected Stephan Volk as their new veterans service officer. Stephan replaces Leo Rookey who recently retired.

Stephan's email address is: walworth.vso@live.com and his hours will be Monday—Wednesday from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Please join SDDVA in welcoming Stephan to our network and in wishing Leo the best in his retirement.

DAV STATE CONVENTION

The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) 80th Department of South Dakota Convention was held at The Hilton Garden Inn in Sioux Falls on May 17-19, 2019.

Delegates elected the following officers to lead the DAV Department of South Dakota for FY 2019-2020:

Commander—Don Sealock of DAV Rapid City Chapter No. 3

Sr. Vice Commander—Dick Turnwall of DAV Northern Hills Chapter No. 11

1st Jr. Vice Commander—Dan Francis of DAV Sioux Falls Chapter No. 1

2nd Jr. Vice Commander—Christine Speirs of DAV Rapid City Chapter No. 3

Treasurer—Gene A. Murphy of DAV Sioux Falls Chapter No. 1

Judge Advocate/Inspector—Robert Hill of DAV Brookings Chapter No. 22

Commander-Elect Don Sealock made the following Commander Appointments:

Adjutant—Gene A. Murphy of DAV Sioux Falls Chapter No. 1

Chaplain—Allan Ochsner of DAV Aberdeen Chapter No. 13

Historian—Dan Francis of DAV Chapter No. 1

Awards were presented at the Commander's Award Luncheon to the following:

- Disabled American Veterans – Commander Appreciation Award 2018-2019 To Commander Gaylord Helmbrecht
- 2019 Disabled American Veterans – Volunteer Of The Year – Rick Albrecht
- 2019 Disabled American Veterans – Outstanding Disabled Veteran Of The Year – Harold Muilenburg
- 2019 Disabled American Veterans - Outstanding Disabled Veteran Of The Year – Dan Francis
- 2019 Disabled American Veterans - Outstanding Veterans Benefits Administration Employee – Tasha Perry
- 2019 Disabled American Veterans - Outstanding Support By A Small Business – Sioux Falls Audiology Associates – Greg Norgaard & Dr. Mandy Norgaard
- 2019 Disabled American Veterans - Outstanding Department Of Veterans Affairs Staff Member – Chris Novak
- 2019 Disabled American Veterans - Outstanding Department Of Veterans Affairs Nurse Practitioner – Keith Behl, NP
- 2019 Disabled American Veterans - Outstanding Support Of Veterans Recreation – Paralyzed Veterans Of America (PVA) North Central Chapter
- 2019 Disabled American Veterans – Outstanding Health Care, Programs, & Services To Veterans – Sanford Health
- 2019 Disabled American Veterans - Outstanding Support To DAV Hospital Transportation Network – 727th Transportation Unit Of Brookings.



Front row (l to r) Speirs and Sealock
Back row (l to r) Francis and Turnwall

(continued on next page)

DAV STATE CONVENTION (CONTINUED)

Special guests were DAV National 14th District Executive Committeeman Warren Tobin and DAV Auxiliary National Past Commander Paula Raymond. The delegates heard firsthand information from these individuals concerning VA budget, VA benefits, services, healthcare proposals of VA Mission Act, caregiver proposals, and important issues facing veterans and their families.

Delegates at the convention contributed \$1,520.00 for the Department Service Foundation Program, \$1,600.00 for the Bulletin Booster, \$2,500.00 for the DAV Hospital Transportation Network, \$800.00 for the DAV Service and Legislation Program, \$1,100.00 727th/DAV Poker Run, and \$500.00 for the South Dakota State Veterans Cemetery Endowment Fund. The Department, with the help of members, Chapters, Auxiliary Units, and friends were able to raise funds for the DAV Annual Convention Raffle Program with all the profit for the DAV Hospital Transportation Network.



The delegates approved 55 resolutions to improve benefits and services to disabled veterans and their families. Fifty (50) of the resolutions were forwarded to DAV National Headquarters for the upcoming National Convention in Orlando, Florida. These resolutions, if passed by the National Convention Delegates, would be introduced into Congress to improve the benefits and services for our veterans.

The Department conducted a Veterans Town Hall Meeting with the following individuals: Panel members were Robert McDivitt, VA Director of VISN 23; Aaron Filsinger, Veterans Service Center Manager; Barbara Teal, VA Acting Director of Sioux Falls Health Care System; Bruce Jones (Senator John Thune's Office); Mark Johnston (Senator Mike Rounds Office); Chelsea Schull (Representative Dusty Johnson's Office); Aaron Pollard, South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs; and Panel Moderator Owen Richards, DAV National Service Officer. This Veterans Town Hall Meeting had discussions concerning the VA Budget, VA Claims, Veterans Legislative Bills, Health Care Mission Act, Caregiver Program, Veterans Employment, Proposals for VA Black Hills, and other important issues facing veterans.

AMERICAN LEGION STATE CONVENTION WRAPS UP

Last weekend veterans gathered in Sioux Falls for the 101st Annual South Dakota American Legion state conference. Veteran leaders heard updates on various American Legion programs and projects, adopted resolutions, elected new leadership and heard reports from state and federal leaders.

The American Legion is the largest war-time veteran service organization in South Dakota with over 18,000 members serving in 240 local American Legion Posts across the state.

Fred Nelson of Spearfish was elected as the State Commander. Nelson graduated from High School in Spearfish, SD, in 1981. At the age of 17, he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and served as an aircraft crew chief and later as an Air Training Command instructor. Nelson is a 21-year continuous member of The American Legion and is currently a member of The Spearfish American Legion Post #164. Nelson is a life member of The American Legion and the Disabled American Veterans and is a member of the Air Force Sergeants Association.



State Commander Nelson

Also elected for State Vice Commanders was Kevin Morello of Piedmont for western Districts and Harry Boner of Castlewood for the Eastern Districts.

In her remarks to the membership, Governor Noem thanked all those that assisted with making the state veterans cemetery a reality and for their fundraising efforts to date. She provided an update on the status of the cemetery project noting that we hope to break ground this Fall.

"To me, this project isn't just about building another cemetery,"

said Governor Noem. "This is a tribute to heroes. A place that will immortalize the sacrifices that have been made for our freedoms. A resting place for the ones who have sacrificed the most. That's the kind of legacy I want our state to have when we talk about honoring our veterans."



State Vice Commander Morello



State Vice Commander Boner

(continued on next page)

AMERICAN LEGION CONVENTION (CONTINUED)

SDDVA Program Manager Erin Bultje addressed the Legion's general membership, the Auxiliary and served as the keynote speaker at the Auxiliary Luncheon. In her remarks, Bultje provided an overview of the Department's successes this past year and talked about issues relating to veterans benefits.

Bultje also assisted with the American Legion auction fundraiser on Friday night. Legionnaires raised over \$7,000 for their foundation (<https://www.sdlegion.org/sd-al-foundation/>).

We're sure that the membership will agree that the hit of the night was when Legion members Darryl Berry of Sturgis and Gary Schumacher of De Smet volunteered to get haircuts for donations to the South Dakota American Legion Foundation. Auctioneer Denny Brendan was able to raise a total of \$1,293 just from these two heads of hair and one really thick beard. Kudos to Darryl and Gary!

The State American Legion Commander's Homecoming will be held at the High Plains Western Heritage Center Spearfish on June 29 and the SD American Legion Auxiliary State President's Homecoming will be held on July 20.

The American Legion mid-winter conference will be held February 21-23 in Oacoma and the 2020 American Legion state convention will be held in Huron June 18-21.



VA HEALTHCARE FACILITIES TO GO SMOKE FREE

As part of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) commitment to provide excellent health care for veterans, the department will implement a new policy restricting smoking by patients, visitors, volunteers, contractors and vendors at its health care facilities by October.

Although the VA has historically permitted smoking in designated areas, there is growing evidence that smoking and exposure to secondhand and thirdhand smoke creates significant medical risks, and risks to safety and direct patient care that are inconsistent with medical requirements and limitations. Accordingly, VA's Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has collaborated with key stakeholders to update and recertify the policy to be consistent with the department's commitment to veterans and the community.

A recent VA survey revealed that approximately 85% of responding facility leadership support smoke-free campuses, and this new policy for patients, visitors, volunteers, contractors and vendors allows the VA to ensure the health and well-being of VA staff, patients and the public.

"We are not alone in recognizing the importance of creating a smoke-free campus," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "As of 2014, 4,000 health care facilities and four national health care systems in the U.S. have implemented smoke-free grounds. This policy change coincides with additional VHA efforts to help us become the provider of choice for veterans and the reason why veterans will choose VA."

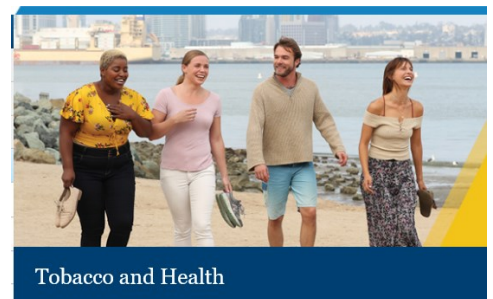
VHA's new smoke-free policy applies to cigarettes, cigars, pipes, any other combustion of tobacco and non-Federal Drug Administration approved electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS), including but not limited to electronic or e-cigarettes, vape pens or e-cigars.

To learn more about health risks associated with smoking, visit the Surgeon General's website at <https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/reports-and-publications/tobacco/index.html> or <https://smokefree.gov/>.

The VHA has extensive resources and programs to assist veterans in their smoke-free journey. They can be found at <https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/quit-tobacco/>.

For additional information about the policy visit:

https://www.va.gov/vhapublications/ViewPublication.asp?pub_ID=8242



Tools & Tips

Learn about different tools to help you quit and how to use them.



Smokefree
Texting
Programs



Using Nicotine
Replacement
Therapy



Smokefree
Social Media



Smokefree
Apps



Build Your Quit
Plan

Jun 13-16—VFW State Convention—Dakota State University—Madison
Jun 8—Military/Veterans Canaries Appreciation Night—Sioux Falls—6:00 pm (CT)
Jun 13—SFVAHCS Welcome Home Event—Main Lobby of Sioux Falls Medical Center—5:00—8:00 pm (CT)
Jun 14—Flag Day
Jun 15—SFVAHCS Whole Health Class—Sioux Falls Vet Center (3200 W. 49th Street) - 9:00 am—11:00 am (CT)
Jun 15—Tribute to Freedom—Honoring our Veterans—Eureka Sports Complex—10:30 am (CT)
Jun 20—VABHHCS Veterans Orientation Program (Building 53—Room 102) Hot Springs—4:30 pm (MT)
Jun 29—Veterans for Veterans Annual Poker Run—Mitchell Depot Bar and Grill—11:00 am (CT)
Jun 29—State American Legion Commander Homecoming—High Plains Western Heritage Center—Spearfish—Social at 1:30 pm and program at 2:00 pm (CT)
Jul 4—State Offices Closed
Jul 17—South Dakota Veterans Council—PVA Headquarters—Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CT)
Jul 19-21—“Last Out” Performance—Thomas H. Craig Center for the Performing Arts—Vermillion High School—Show times 8:00 pm (CT) on 19-20 and 2:00 pm (CT) on 21st
Jul 20—PVA 5th Annual Poker Run—Thirsty Duck Bar and Grill (945 S. Marion Road) - Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CT)
July 20—SD American Legion Auxiliary State President Homecoming—United Methodist Church—Dell Rapids—2:00 pm (CT)
July 20-24—National VFW Convention—Orlando, FL
Jul 20—SFVAHCS Whole Health Class—Sioux Falls Vet Center (3200 W. 49th Street) - 9:00 am—11:00 am (CT)
Aug 2—American Legion HWY 281 Centennial Run
Aug 2—American Legion Highway 281 Centennial Run (ND/SD Border to SD/NE Border)
Aug 3-6—DAV National Convention—Orlando, FL
Aug 17—SFVAHCS Whole Health Class—Sioux Falls Vet Center (3200 W. 49th Street) - 9:00 am—11:00 am (CT)
Aug 17-18—Sioux Falls Air Show
Aug 24—Wine and Gala Auction (MidWest Honor Flight Benefit) - Calico Skies Winery
Aug 26—Sioux Falls Barrel House (MidWest Honor Flight Benefit - 10% all day to MWHF) - 4701 E 54th Street
Aug 29—Veterans Day at the Fair
Aug 26-29—SDDVA Benefit School
Aug 31—15th Annual 727th Transportation/DAV Poker Run—Swiftel Center—Brookings
Sep 21—SFVAHCS Whole Health Class—Sioux Falls Vet Center (3200 W. 49th Street) - 9:00 am—11:00 am (CT)
Sep 21—Davison County Veterans Wellness and Benefit Fair—Mitchell Corn Palace—8:00 am—4:30 pm (CT)
Sep 21-22—SD American Legion Golf Tournament—Hartford Golf Course
Nov 2—2nd Annual Hangar Dance (MidWest Honor Flight Benefit) - Mid America Museum of Aviation—Sioux City, IA—7:00 pm (CT)



Audry Ricketts, Public Information Officer
South Dakota Department of the Military <http://military.sd.gov>
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs <http://vetaffairs.sd.gov>
Soldiers and Sailors Building - 425 E Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501
Phone: 605-773-8242
E-mail address: audry.ricketts@state.sd.us

